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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
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EXAMINER

ONUAKU, C

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2615

DATE MAILED:

06/05/01

36

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

Office Action Summary

Application No.
08/614,196

Applicant(s)
Tamura et al

Examiner
Christopher Onuaku

Art Unit
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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on Mar 15, 2001
- 2a) ☒ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 35 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above, claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claims _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirements.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner.
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).

a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of:

1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

*See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

- 14) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

Attachment(s)

- 15) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 18) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 16) ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 19) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 17) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s). _____ 20) ☐ Other: _____

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DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-16 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

3. Claims 1-2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

Claim 1 recites an image sensing apparatus having image sensing means for sensing a subject image formed on an image sensing plane and outputting an image signal corresponding to the subject image, comprising zone selecting means for selecting any zone on the image sensing plane in a state that said image sensing means is sensing the subject image, exposure detection means for detecting an exposure condition on the basis of an image signal in a selected zone, exposure control means for controlling exposure based upon the detected exposure condition,

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memory means for storing control parameters outputted by the exposure control means, the memory means configured to store the control parameters when an exposure control processing by said exposure control means is completed and an optimum exposure control state is obtained. In apparent contradiction to what is recited above, applicant further recites control means for, regardless of a selecting operation by said zone selecting means, controlling said exposure control means to fix an exposure control state to the optimum exposure control state by using the control parameters stored in said memory means.

By adding the phrase “regardless of a selecting operation by said zone selecting means” to the last limitation of claim 1, this limitation appears to cancel the preceding limitations (i.e., zone selecting and optimum automatic exposure processing performed by the four earlier cited limitations). It is pertinent to point out that it was the result of achieving an optimum exposure condition of the selected imaging zone during automatic exposure operation that the consequent optimum exposure parameters obtained were stored. If no imaging zone selecting operation were performed, there would have been no processing and calculation of optimum exposure parameters, and, consequently, there would have been no optimum exposure parameters to store.

The specification discloses storing optimum exposure parameters calculated during automatic exposure (AE) processing. When the operator considers the optimum exposure parameters calculated during AE not acceptable, the operator then goes into manual adjustments of the camera exposure elements to correct the stored AE optimum exposure parameters. However, if the operator still can not achieve a satisfactory optimum exposure condition by

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manual adjustments, the operator would then substitute the originally calculated and stored optimum exposure parameters obtained during AE processing.

However, it appears that this is not what is claimed by the current amendment to claim 1, The last limitation of claim 1, which is the amended limitation in claim 1, appears to contradict the preceding limitations in claim 1. Furthermore, what is now claimed by the current amendment to claim 1 does not appear to be disclosed in the specifications.

Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph for the same reasons as given in claim 1 above, since claim 2 is dependent from claim 1.

4. Claims 3-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

Claim 3 recites an image sensing apparatus having image sensing means for sensing a subject image formed on an image sensing plane and outputting an image signal corresponding to the subject image, comprising I) zone selecting means for selecting any zone on the image sensing plane in a state that said image sensing means is sensing the subject image, ii) exposure detection means for detecting an exposure condition on the basis of the image signal in a selected zone, iii) exposure control means for controlling an exposure based upon the detected exposure condition, iv) memory means for storing control parameters outputted by the exposure control means, the

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memory means configured to store the control parameters when an exposure control processing by said exposure control means is completed and an optimum exposure control state is obtained; v) and selected-zone detection means for determining whether the image signal captured by said image sensing means contains said zone upon lapse of a prescribed period of time, and outputting a signal for resetting control parameters in said memory means if the captured image signal is not contained in said zone. In apparent contradiction to what is recited in the limitations I-iv above, applicant further recites control means for, regardless of a selecting operation by said zone selecting means, controlling said exposure control means to fix an exposure control state to the optimum exposure control state by using the control parameters stored in said memory means.

By adding the phrase “regardless of a selecting operation by said zone selecting means” to claim 3, the limitation in claim 3 in which this phrase is added appears to cancel the preceding I-iv limitations. It is pertinent to point out that it was the result of achieving an optimum exposure condition of the selected imaging zone during automatic exposure operation that the consequent optimum exposure parameters obtained were stored. If no imaging zone selecting operation were performed, there would have been no processing and calculation of optimum exposure parameters, and, consequently, there would have been no optimum exposure parameters to store.

The specification discloses storing optimum exposure parameters calculated during automatic exposure (AE) processing. When the operator considers the optimum exposure parameters calculated during AE not acceptable, the operator then goes into manual adjustments of the camera exposure elements to correct the stored AE optimum exposure parameters. If the

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operator still can not achieve a satisfactory optimum exposure condition by manual adjustments, the operator would then substitute the originally calculated and stored optimum exposure parameters obtained during AE processing.

However, it appears that this is not what is claimed by the current amendment to claim 3. The specific amended limitation in claim 3 appears to contradict the preceding limitations I-iv in claim 3. Furthermore, what is now claimed in the specific amended limitation in claim 3, as discussed above, does not appear to be disclosed in the specifications.

Claims 4&5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph for the same reasons as given in claim 3 above, since claims 4&5 are dependent from claim 3.

5. Claims 6-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

Claim 6 recites an image sensing apparatus having image sensing means for sensing a subject image formed on an image sensing plane and outputting an image signal corresponding to the subject image, comprising: I) zone selecting means for selecting any zone on the image sensing plane in a state that said image sensing means is sensing the subject image, ii) exposure detection means for detecting an exposure condition relating to the image signal in a selected zone on the basis of the image signal, iii) exposure control means for controlling an exposure based

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upon the detected exposure condition, iv) first memory means for storing control parameters outputted by the exposure control means, the memory means configured to store the control parameters when an exposure control processing by said exposure control means is completed and an optimum exposure control state is obtained;

v) second memory means for storing a video signal of said zone; and detection means for determining whether a zoomed image signal captured by said image sensing means contains the video signal of said zone stored in said second memory means, and outputting a signal for resetting the control parameters in the first memory means if the captured image signal is not contained in said zone. In apparent contradiction to what is recited in the limitations I-iv above , applicant further recites control means for, regardless of a selecting operation by said zone selecting means, controlling said exposure control means to fix an exposure control state to the optimum exposure control state by using the control parameters stored in said memory means.

By adding the phrase “regardless of a selecting operation by said zone selecting means” to claim 6, the limitation in claim 6 in which this phrase is added appears to cancel the preceding I-iv limitations. It is pertinent to point out that it was the result of achieving an optimum exposure condition of the selected imaging zone during automatic exposure operation that the consequent optimum exposure parameters obtained were stored. If no imaging zone selecting operation were performed, there would have been no processing and calculation of optimum exposure parameters, and, consequently, there would have been no optimum exposure parameters to store.

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The specification discloses storing optimum exposure parameters calculated during automatic exposure (AE) processing. When the operator considers the optimum exposure parameters calculated during AE not acceptable, the operator then goes into manual adjustments of the camera exposure elements to correct the stored AE optimum exposure parameters. If the operator still can not achieve a satisfactory optimum exposure condition by manual adjustments, the operator would then substitute the originally calculated and stored optimum exposure parameters obtained during AE processing.

However, it appears that this is not what is claimed by the current amendment to claim 6. The specific amended limitation in claim 6 appears to contradict the preceding limitations I-iv in claim 6. Furthermore, what is now claimed in the specific amended limitation in claim 6, as discussed above, does not appear to be disclosed in the specifications.

Claims 7&8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph for the same reasons as given in claim 6 above, since claims 7&8 are dependent from claim 6.

6. Claims 9-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

Claim 9 recites an image sensing apparatus having display means for displaying an image signal, comprising: I) a pointing device for selecting any zone in a screen displayed by said

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display means in a state that said image sensing means is sensing the subject image, ii) adjusting means for applying a prescribed adjustment to the image signal of said zone, iii) memory means for storing adjusted data outputted by said adjusting means. In apparent contradiction to what is recited in the limitations I-iii above, applicant further recites control means for storing the adjusting data in said memory means, the memory means configured to store the adjusting data when adjustment by said adjusting means is completed and a prescribed state is obtained, and for controlling said adjusting means to fix an exposure control state to the prescribed state by using the adjusting data stored in said memory means, regardless of a selecting operation by said zone selecting means.

By adding the phrase “regardless of a selecting operation by said zone selecting means” to claim 9, the limitation in claim 9 in which this phrase is added appears to cancel the preceding I-iii limitations. It is pertinent to point out that it was the result of achieving an optimum exposure condition of the selected imaging zone during automatic exposure operation that the consequent optimum exposure parameters obtained were stored. If no imaging zone selecting operation were performed, there would have been no processing and calculation of optimum exposure parameters for a selected zone, and, consequently, there would have been no optimum exposure parameters to store.

The specification discloses storing optimum exposure parameters calculated during automatic exposure (AE) processing. When the operator considers the optimum exposure parameters calculated during AE not acceptable, the operator then goes into manual adjustments

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of the camera exposure elements to correct the stored AE optimum exposure parameters. If the operator still can not achieve a satisfactory optimum exposure condition by manual adjustments, the operator would then substitute the originally calculated and stored optimum exposure parameters obtained during AE processing.

However, it appears that this is not what is claimed by the current amendment to claim 9. The specific amended limitation in claim 9 appears to contradict the preceding limitations I-iii in claim 9. Furthermore, what is now claimed in the specific amended limitation in claim 9, as discussed above, does not appear to be disclosed in the specifications.

Claims 10-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph for the same reasons as given in claim 9 above, since claims 10-16 are dependent from claim 9.

7. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

8. Claims 1,3,6&9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

9. Claims 1,3&6 recite the limitation "control means for, regardless of a selecting operation by said zone selecting means, controlling said exposure control means to fix an exposure control state to the optimum exposure control state by using the control parameters stored in said

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memory means" in lines 14-16. This limitation appears to contradict the preceding limitations in the respective claims.

Claim 9 recites the limitation "control means for storing the adjusting data in said memory means, the memory means configured to store the adjusting data when adjustment by said adjusting means is completed and a prescribed state is obtained, and for controlling said adjusting means to fix an exposure control state to the prescribed state by using the adjusting data stored in said memory means, regardless of a selecting operation by said zone selecting means". This limitation appears to contradict the preceding limitations in the claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

10. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

11. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mimura et al (US 5,20,359) in view of Stempeck (US 3,945,025).

Because of the 112 first and 112 second problems of amended claim 1 and because amended claim 1 appears to contradict itself, examiner, therefore, rejects claim 1 to the examiner's best and broadest interpretation of claim 1 as amended.

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Regarding claim 1, Mimura et al disclose an image pickup device for use in a television camera including a diaphragm control optimizing the light amount for a subject, comprising:

a) zone selecting means for selecting any zone on the image sensing plane in a state that said the image sensing means is sensing the subject image (see photographic area selecting switch 10; col.2, line 35 to col.3, line 28);

b) exposure detecting means for detecting an exposure condition on the basis of the image signal in a selected zone, and exposure control means for controlling an exposure based upon the detected exposure condition (see the microcomputer 11; col.2, line 55 to col.3, line 20);

c) memory means for storing control parameters outputted by the exposure control means, the memory means configured to store control parameters when an exposure control processing by the exposure control means is completed and an optimum exposure control state is obtained (again see microcomputer 11, and signal processing section 5 wherein the microcomputer excludes the masked blocks and controls the lens 2 on the basis of the signal for the remaining blocks to obtain optimum amount of light on the remaining photometric areas; col.2, line 55 to col.3, line 28), here the microcomputer 11 uses the "stored" optimum exposure parameters (inherently stored by the microcomputer 11) to adjust for an optimum amount of light of the remaining photometric area, some of which may be backlighted;

d) control means for controlling the exposure control means to fix an exposure control state, i.e. optimum exposure state, by using the control parameters stored in the memory means (see microcomputer 11, and the discussions above).

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Mimura fails to explicitly disclose control means for, **regardless of a selecting operation by said zone selecting means**, controlling said exposure control means to fix an exposure control state to the optimum exposure control state by using the control parameters stored in said memory means. Examiner reads this limitations as automatic exposure override by manual adjustment of exposure parameters (i.e., the determined optimum exposure values during automatic exposure operation are not completely eliminated, but set aside, for example, temporarily, while the operator attempts to achieve, for example, a new desirable optimum exposure condition

Stempeck teaches an exposure control system for photographic apparatus of a variety utilizing a pulse driven stepper motor to drive the light regulating elements of an exposure mechanism wherein should the camera operator wish to manually override the automatic exposure control system of the camera, switch S3 is actuated, and element 374 is set to a predetermined exposure value. The exposure control system then responds to depression of button 114 to carry out an exposure cycle in accordance with that evaluation (see Fig.1&7, col.7, line 65 to col.8, line 40; col.19, 51-57).

Providing an automatic exposure condition override capability of the optimum exposure condition obtained during automatic exposure operation by the operator's manual adjustments to the exposure control system of a camera system, provides the operator with the desirable advantage of, for example, achieving a desired optimum exposure condition, different from the optimum exposure condition achieved during automatic exposure operation.

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It would have been obvious to modify Mimura by realizing Mimura with automatic exposure override capability by the operator's manual adjustments to the exposure control system of a camera system, as taught by Stempeck, since provides the operator with the desirable advantage of, for example, achieving a desired optimum exposure condition, different from the optimum exposure condition achieved during automatic exposure operation.

12. Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mimura et al in view of Stempeck and further in view of Munson (US 5,648,814).

Regarding claim 2, Mimura and Stempeck fail to explicitly disclose wherein if the value relating to exposure is outside a prescribes range of values stored in advance, the exposure maintaining means selects an upper-limit value or a lower-limit value of the prescribed range of values as a value relating to exposure. Munson teaches in Fig.1-4 method and apparatus of a camera function of a video conferencing system enhanced such that it will operate in an automatic adjustment mode for brightness and color for only a predetermined period of time comprising microcontroller 32 which operates camera 16 in its initial period in the automatic adjustment mode. During this period, as part of the normal operation, microcontroller 32 continuously checks and determines if the image quality is "the same" as the "ideal image". If the image quality is "the same" as the "ideal image", microcontroller 32 continues operation without making any adjustments. Otherwise, microcontroller 32 adjusts brightness and color balance as appropriate. Being able to adjust the exposure value of an object to fall within a predetermined optimum range

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of values, for example, ideal values, helps to simplify the exposure control function in a camera. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to further modify Mimura, as taught by Munson, to include a means to facilitate adjusting the exposure value of an object to fall within a predetermined optimum range of values, for example, ideal values, which helps to simplify the exposure control function in a camera.

13. Claims 3-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mimura et al in view of Stempeck and further in view of Iwasaki (US 5,461,452).

Because of the 112 first and 112 second problems of amended claim 3 and because amended claim 3 appears to contradict itself, examiner, therefore, rejects claim 3 to the examiner's best and broadest interpretation of claim 3 as amended.

Regarding claim 3, the claimed limitations of claim 3 are accommodated in the discussion of claim 1, except the claimed selected-zone detection means. Iwasaki in Fig.28&30 shows a visual axis detecting device 110 (col.18, lines 55-67) which detects the visual axis of the photographer, and a tracking device 155 (col.18, lines 64-67, and col.19, line 1 to col.21, line 6), and has approximate spectral characteristics. By adding the selected-zone detecting means feature to a camera, the photographer is better able to produce a better quality picture because of improved exposure. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to further modify the camera of Mimura , as taught by Iwasaki, to include a selected-zone detecting feature to improve the exposure control capability of the camera, thereby creating a better quality camera.

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Regarding claim 4, the claimed limitations of claim 4 are accommodated in the discussion of claim 2 above.

Regarding claim 5, Mimura now modified by Stempeck and Iwasaki discloses the claimed selecting means for allowing a photographer to select whether maintenance of exposure is to be nullified. As discussed in claim 1 above, Stempeck teaches automatic override capability that provides the operator with the capability to override the automatic exposure values obtained during automatic exposure operation and manually adjust the camera exposure control elements in order to achieve a new desirable optimum exposure values. This way the operator has the ability to nullify or not the exposure value signal of the camera system (see Stempeck, Fig.1&7, col.19, lines 51-570 position of the image that the detecting processing portion 115 detects.

14. Claims 6,7&8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mimura in view of Stempeck and Iwasaki and further in view of Shimuzu (US 5,400,074).

Because of the 112 first and 112 second problems of amended claim 1 and because amended claim 6 appears to contradict itself, examiner, therefore, rejects claim 6 to the examiner's best and broadest interpretation of claim 6 as amended.

Regarding claim 6, Mimura, as modified by Iwasaki, further teaches in Fig. 1, an exposing apparatus and method for performing optimum exposure control in correspondence to a luminance level of an object comprising:

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- a) the claimed zone selecting means which is discussed in claim 1;
- b) the claimed exposure detecting means which is also discussed in claim 1;
- c) the claimed exposure control means which is discussed in claim 1;
- d) the "first" claimed memory means, which again is also. discussed in claim 1;
- e) the claimed "second" memory means for storing a video signal of the zone is disclosed by Iwasaki in Fig.45 and column 3 0, lines 5 7-67 and column 3 1, lines 1-6. Here Iwasaki shows that the reading circuit 192 reads the outputs from the element indicated by the coordinates (Xa,Ya) from the CCD 107 according to the decision result indicating that the object is changed. The transferring circuit 193 transfers the above-named coordinates (Xa,Ya), and the outputs from the element obtained by the reading circuit 192 as coordinates (Xb,Yb) indicating the position of new object, and these data are stored in the coordinates holding portion 156. Thereafter, the tracking device 155 executes tracking processing of the position of the object on the basis of the above-mentioned position of the new object.

Neither Mimura, Stempeck nor Iwasaki shows the claimed detection means for determining whether a zoomed image signal captured by the image sensing means contains the video signal of the zone stored in the "second" memory means, and outputting a signal for resetting the control parameters in the "first" memory means if the captured image signal is not contained in the zone.

However, Shimuzu teaches in Fig.5,6&7, col.4, line 62 to col.5, line 32, a video camera device comprising a zoom lens position detecting circuit 15. This zoom lens position detecting

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circuit detects the amount of movement of the zoom lens in the inner focus lens assembly 1, and the detected amount is supplied to the ROM 16. The ROM 16 stores amounts of F-drop corresponding to various positions of the zoom lens, as shown in Fig.6. An amount of F-drop corresponding to the position of the zoom lens is supplied from ROM 16 to the control amount computing circuit 12 which calculates the open amount for the iris 2, and a gain for the AGC amplifier 4, on the basis of outputs from the loop filter 11 and the ROM 16. Thereafter, the output from the control amount computing circuit 12 is sent to the iris driving circuit 13 and the D/A converter 14. The output from the iris driving circuit 13 is then sent to the iris 2 to control the open amount thereof. Fig.7 shows a graph where the gain B of the AGC amplifier 4 is corrected to the gain curve B' by adding a gain amount 'W' corresponding to the amount of F-drop. This gain correction process shows that the zoomed video signal captured by the image sensor is reset and then corrected if the zoomed video signal is not contained.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to further modify the camera of Mimura, to include a zoomed video signal detecting means, as taught by Shimuzu, as an added feature to increase the versatility of the camera.

Claim 7 is rejected for the same reasons given with respect to claim 4 discussed above.

Claim 8 is rejected for the same reasons given with respect to claim 5 discussed above.

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15. Claims 9-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mimura in view of Stempeck and Iwasaki and further in view of Faltermeier (US 5,579,156).

Regarding claims 9, 10 &12, the claimed limitations of claim 9 are accommodated in the discussions of claim 1 above, except for the claimed pointing device. Mimura discloses display means (see display circuit 6; and col.2, line 29 to col.4, line 4.. Mimura, Stempeck and Iwasaki fail to disclose the claimed pointing device, for selecting any zone in a screen displayed by the display means. Faltermeier et al disclose in Fig.1 a photomicroscope with a video camera and an exposure time control for a still camera comprising the claimed display means(see monitor 25) for displaying the image area recorded with the camera, and the claimed pointing device(see the track ball 27c; col.4) which is used to select the object areas of particular interest, for exposure metering which ensures that these object areas are suitably exposed.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Mimura by realizing Mimura a pointing device, as taught by Faltermeier, for selecting object area of particular interest.

Regarding claim 11, Faltermeier teaches, as discussed in claim 9 above, a track ball as a pointing device. It is well known in the art that the track ball and the mouse are both used as pointing devices.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the

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invention was made to further modify the camera of Mimura realizing the apparatus of Mimura with a mouse as a pointing device in order to increase the versatility of Mimura, thereby making the apparatus more commercially appealing.

Regarding claim 13, Iwasaki discloses the adjusting means adjusts exposure of the image sensing device by adjusting f-stop(focusing), shutter(exposure), and gain(see Fig.28; col.21).

Regarding claim 14, the claimed limitation wherein when adjustment by the adjusting means has attained a prescribed state, the control means maintains the state of adjustment prevailing at this time is accommodated in the discussions of claim I above.

Regarding claim 15, in Fig. 1, and column 4, lines 50-53, Faltermeier teaches the claimed selecting means for allowing the photographer to select whether storage of the adjusting data by the control means is performed or not is met by the disclosure that via switching knobs 27b (adjusting means, see claim 1), the user, which is the photographer, can choose whether the entire video image shall be used for exposure control or only an image area of alternatively 1%,3% or 10% of the entire image surface. Since the photographer chooses which image portion he wants to video, the control means stores only that image chosen by the photographer through the switching knobs 27b.

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16. Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mimura in view of Iwasaki and Faltermeier et al and further in view of Arai et al (US 5,570,156).

Regarding claim 16, Mimura, Iwasaki and Faltermeier fail to disclose the claimed limitation wherein the screen is a monitor screen of an electronic viewfinder.

However, Arai. et al disclose in Fig.3a camera utilizing detection of visual line comprising the claimed electronic viewfinder with a monitor screen which is met by the electronic viewfinder 101(col.4, lines 58-59) which inherently has a monitor screen for viewing video images of objects.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to further modify the camera of Mimura, as taught by Arai. et al, to include an electronic viewfinder, as an added feature, in order to monitor video images of objects, and thereby increase the exposure control range of the video camera of Mimura.

17. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event,

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however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Conclusion

18. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from this examiner should be directed to Christopher Onuaku whose telephone number is (703) 308-7555. The examiner can normally be reached on Tuesday to Thursday from 7:30 am to 5:00 pm. The examiner can also be reached on alternate Monday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone is unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Wendy Garber, can be reached on (703) 305-4929.

Any response to this action should be mailed to:

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

Washington, D.C. 20231

or faxed to:

(703) 308-6306 and (703) 308-6296, (for formal communications intended for entry)

Or:

(703) 308-6306 and (703) 308-6296 (for informal or draft communications, please label "PROPOSED" or "DRAFT")

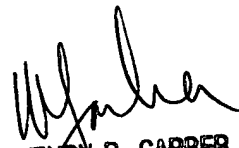
Art Unit: 2615

Hand-delivered responses should be brought to Crystal Park II, 2121 Crystal Drive,
Arlington. VA., Sixth Floor (Receptionist).

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be direct
to the Group receptionist whose telephone is (703) 305-4700.


COO

5/31/01


WENDY R. GARBER
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2600